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THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

PSYCHOLOGY AND SCIENTIFIC METHODS

THE USE AND MISUSE OF HISTORY.

THE classics, it is said, must be expounded anew for every generation in order that they may continually bear fruit in the present. The recorded past is in itself mute; it receives its articulation from the mind of the present. We are impelled to reinterpret the records and sources, not merely because the material is frequently amplified by the discovery or rediscovery of forgotten records and the disclosing of remains hitherto neglected, but still more because the concepts that guide historical writing in one age are critically scrutinized and have their weaknesses revealed in a later period. Revision in the light of fresher ideas is accordingly welcomed, and a different fashion of writing history and different ideas concerning what may be expected from historical writing occupy the mind.

Signs are not lacking of a dissatisfaction with the ideas that regulated the larger works in the history of philosophy of the last century; the leading ideas that determined the point of view from which the history of philosophy was regarded in the more important works spread from them into the class-room compendiums, so that even the lesser works do not escape criticism. There exists, with respect to the history of philosophy, a keener sensitivity for distinguishing between the character of a philosophy in its original concrete setting and the traditions concerning that philosophy conserved by the histories of philosophy. Without attempting to define precisely the source of this warier attitude, it may be said that it is generated in the same circumstances that have given rise to the social and sociological point of view that prevails in contemporary thought. It is not easy to say just what this later attitude finds objectionable in the older histories of philosophy and what better mode of writing the history of philosophy should be suggested. However, a provisional characterization of the situation may be offered.

One cause of the rather common dissatisfaction with the customary manner of treating the history of philosophy may be described as the practise of turning the history of philosophy into a method of establishing the historian's own system of philosophy, or of confirming a certain type of philosophy as the outcome and

“lesson” of that history. Indirectly the history becomes an elaborate argument for this or that kind of philosophy. This may be regarded as inevitable because the historian of philosophy suffers from those limitations of sympathy and point of view that handicap all historians. But even if this be admitted we can assert that the privilege need not be abused. The difficulty is of course a part of the general difficulty of writing about the past in the present. It is the source of much skepticism concerning history as a whole. Lord Chesterfield, it is reported, during illness refused to have historical writings read to him because, he said, he knew they were lies. This is rather an elaborate recognition of the difficulty. History written before the event is prophecy and is not very dependable. But is history written while it is being made or after the making so much better? The historian recording contemporary happenings can seldom grasp or nicely balance the multitudinous forces that are engaged and revealed, his *aperçus* are generally either partial or superficial, and his profundities artificial. He is overwhelmed by the plethora of material. The historian writing after the event has certain advantages. The materials have been sifted; and after-effects may help to place causes in better perspective. But while the opening of archives and the revelation of secrecies, the winnowing of the material, and a more composed mind, are advantages, something has been lost. The animating spirit has paled and vanished. For the immediacy of sensing and comprehension and the active sympathy of the spectator the historian must substitute devious and dubious inferences, lacking in that warmth of intimacy of the participator which even the most strenuous exertion of a re-creative imagination can not wholly compass. At every step there is the danger of reconstructing the past in terms of the present while seeking to construe the present in terms of the past. There can be no completeness of record. However ample the data at our disposal, they are the desiccated remains of a living time. To resuscitate the life that is gone requires the infusion of life; but the only life open to the historian is that of his own age. Resuscitation is apt therefore to be a putting of a new life into the old body rather than the restoration of the departed life. An almost inveterate habit conspires to lead the historian to such an arrangement, organization, and evaluation of his data that the present and the more recent past are injected into the more distant past. The past thereby reconstructed is naturally displayed as organically connected with the present, and the past is deftly disclosed as containing embryonically the present.

These admissions however do not justify the use of the history of philosophy for establishing a doctrine or a tradition. We must

recognize that these handicaps are matters of degree and are subject to some control. If we should take them over-seriously we must conclude that historical research is a sort of sport, a poetical adventure, and history an art, not a science. And for that matter, the question whether history is an art or a science is still a matter of debate. "History, . . . , which passes for the account of facts, is in reality a collection of apperceptions of an indeterminate material; for even the material of history is not fact, but consists of memories and words subject to ever-varying interpretation. No historian can be without bias, because the bias defines the history. . . . Then, after the facts are thus chosen, marshaled, and emphasized, comes the indication of causes and relations; and in this part of his work the historian plunges avowedly into speculation, and becomes a philosophical poet And the value of history is similar to that of poetry, and varies with the beauty, power, and adequacy of the form in which the indeterminate material of human life is presented."¹ It would hardly be profitable to discuss the question whether the history of philosophy is an art or a science. Perhaps the simplest attitude to take is that the impediments enumerated are hardly insuperable obstacles to trustworthiness. They indicate the need of methods and agencies of control. And in any case, if it be insisted that the work of the historian of philosophy is always an art, the historian's artistry need not be mere license. It would be well to insist that he be constrained by his material and by a technique arising from a mastery of the materials. His imaginative constructions, even if he be a philosophical poet, should not be vagaries and magical exegetical tricks. One might recall Huck Finn's remarks concerning Mr. Twain's history of the *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*: Huck recognized that there were some "stretchers" in Mr. Twain's account of the adventures, and yet in the main he approved of the narrative. In similar fashion we can not wholly discredit history because of an occasional "stretcher." After all, the important consideration is the kind and degree of the stretching that is performed. Admitting that some stretchers are unavoidable, we may find consolation in the thought that a little stretching, if judicious, may add interest and relevance to a work even if it prejudices for the literal-minded its fidelity as record. It is worth while sacrificing some slight degree of completeness in a compilation of abstractions, on condition that the supposed lessons of the history really have a fruitful re-entry into later human experience. This may counterbalance the depreciatory attitude attributed to Chesterfield, and leads to an insistence on the need for the continual revision of history. History affords a sort of second-hand catholicity

¹ George Santayana: *The Sense of Beauty*, pp. 141-142.

of experience. But it must gain its relevance and applicability through a judicious and not a capricious organization of its raw material and it must genuinely extend experience.

The defect of the histories of philosophy that have had the greatest vogue is that they have done the stretching not wisely, but too well. At least too well for our present temper. Whatever world-views the more celebrated historians confirmed for their contemporaries through the history of philosophy, it can hardly be maintained that these works afford the present student a similar service. The peculiar manner in which the history of philosophy, the philosophy of history, and a diffused metaphysics or theology were intermingled is not as illuminating to our generation as to earlier generations. Just as history in general may degenerate into an edifying substantiation of an existent system of ideals and aspirations, and an elaborate confirmation of the finality of present values and ideas, so the history of philosophy can be written, and has been written, in such a way that the purposes of edification and apologetics are subserved. The fact that systems and the philosophers who write them influence one another may be shaped into a proof that the progressive attainment of truth leads to a certain later system and outlook as the consummation of the movement. Continuities of speculation become through this treatment an evidence and assurance that such speculation is "on the right track." This does not occur only when *a priori* ideas, and especially the doctrine of an immanent dialectical movement in history, form the basis of treatment. We have of course the clearest illustration of this fashion of writing the history of philosophy when it is so constructed. But the same difficulties occur on a more unassuming scale when no similar guiding ideas are avowed. From the more pretentious works the fashion passes into the simpler works. Besides, the temptation to find just a bit of immanent dialectic here and there is well-nigh irresistible, for the regularities and linkage thereby secured give the account a high degree of esthetic appeal. To get one stage of history out of a preceding stage, neatly, compactly, and inescapably, is as absorbing a feat as a conjurer's pulling a rabbit out of a hat. This flippant remark does not mean, of course, that there are no continuities of speculation, no criss-cross and longitudinal influences in the course of temporal events; it does mean, however, that the outcome of previous efforts to interlock all the materials of history or of the history of philosophy in one majestic movement suggests some skepticism even when the process is scaled down. There seems to be little likelihood of contemporary historians trying this grand style. The extent to which we are still influenced by those models is another question that we would do well

to ponder. If the flippancy is pardonable, one might ask how many of the secondary stretchers we can accept, granting that the wholesale stretching is no longer acceptable.

Even those to whom such ideas are repugnant may nevertheless be unwittingly victimized by them, particularly because of the brilliant examples of such work that we already possess, and because, indeed, the histories of philosophy to which the student is apt to turn are modeled in varying degrees after the classic expressions of this spirit. The influence in this direction of Hegel's *Phenomenology* and *Philosophy of History*, and of such works as Kuno Fisher's monumental *History of Modern Philosophy* is to this day a not inconsiderable force. To the Romantic movement in the early nineteenth century primarily is due the tendency to seek in history the manifestation of some one principle, the unfaltering progressive realization or development of something-or-other. In discovering the "historical point of view" the romanticist was apt to discover also a method of demonstrating the validity of romantic aspirations and sweeping generalizations concerning God, man, and the cosmos. Without depreciating the value and ancient services of the methods thus inaugurated or the results of such ideas, it is fair to point out how easily the notion of historical evolution combined with romantic ideals leads to manufactured history. J. T. Merz has indicated this danger as emanating from the Romantic movements: he notes a "secret tendency nursed in the school of Hegel to transform theological into philosophical dogmatics, and also to look upon the line of reasoning which runs through the idealistic systems as the true backbone of all philosophy, compared with which other speculations, naturalistic on the one side, theological on the other, have only collateral, but not truly systematic, importance. The latter tendency is probably most distinctly evident in Kuno Fisher's great *History*. It was, however, considerably mitigated in the later editions. . . ."² We can admit the evil results of Hegel's attitude without depreciating the value of some of his perceptions.

There are, of course, other histories of philosophy that certainly are not guilty of being sources of these forms of misguidance. Some are formidable compendiums of information, filled with reports of the dissection of systems. A few words concerning such phenomena as the rise of the Sophists, a brief elucidation of the attitude of the church in the nominalistic controversy, and other occasional bits of "historical background" sketched here and there, and that is about all there is to animate the dusty pages. They have their

² Merz: *History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 4, p. 266, note; cf. p. 741, and Vol. 3, p. 150.

utility as manuals in the anatomy of systems; if they contain no stretchers, neither do they manifest the pulse of life. They do not seduce the imagination; but neither do they enlarge or invigorate it. Like mummies, the outward features are preserved, but the vital principle has departed.

Are we placed in a dilemma? Must the history of philosophy be either a compendium or syllabus or else an unrestrained manipulation of material for the substantiation of a transcendental principle or an over-expanded formula? Must it be either a digest, or a circumlocutous method of presenting a system or a type of philosophy as the crowning achievement of philosophical history?

To avoid the dry-as-dust, we may maintain, it is not necessary to admit that the history of philosophy must be whimsical and capricious. A preliminary programme or a synoptical point of view is in any case necessary. It is the guiding idea and method that require criticism and control.

Those who are convinced that history is always a species of poetry may say to all this: If interpretation in terms of the individual writer's point of view is inevitable, how can one be sure of betterment by rejecting the older ideas and advocating a new approach? Since every historian is influenced by the opinions of his own age and possesses foibles and preferences all his own, it follows that if he hasn't an outspoken *a priori* scheme which he seeks to illustrate in his history, he has some other scheme whose character and influence he may not wholly recognize, but which is in effect equally *a priori* and misleading. To this an appropriate reply can be made. Because every historian is limited and innocently biased in his attitude toward his subject-matter, it does not follow that their interpretative efforts are equally informing and valuable or equally pernicious and misleading.

The matter in dispute depends on the kind of idea which forms the leading principle of interpretation. The preliminary programmes vary in the degree to which they are amenable to control, subject to verification or checking-up of some sort, and in their congruity with the total progress of science and research. To guard against the whimsical, the extravagant and rhapsodical, is not so difficult. Poetry that can be identified as poetry does not easily pose as science. The effective beguilement of the mind occurs chiefly when poetry dons the sober mantle of a metaphysical or theological or "scientific" concept. The transcendental principle, embodying some sort of theological or metaphysical vision in more or less sublimated form, that has gathered authority and impressiveness from its possibilities of edification, soon gets out of hand. The

evolutionary formula, captivating in its brevity, packs all history into a few stages, and exerts a spell over the mind. The lesson of history may be invoked in the interests of various kinds of programmes. But the lesson must often be injected into history before it can be gotten out of it, unless we are to believe that time brings no genuine novelties.

These and similar notions are the chief sources of the injudicious stretchers. Principles of a transcendental character or a scientific formula whose universality and sufficiency are hastily assumed are responsible for this cavalier treatment of the raw materials. Principles too impressive to be called fanciful, too edifying to be discounted as whimsical, and too recondite to be submitted to a homely test, sustain the attempt to attribute one direction, a single character, and a fixed goal to the historical flux. The historian's mind is apt to be dominated by such ideas for they are frequently captivating. Ideas of a transcendental nature are more likely to transfigure history romantically than other programmes. For such ideas can not be verified. Often, indeed, they seem to be abundantly verified, but that is because we mistake illustration for verification, while the illustration is but a particular instance of interpretation in the light of the idea. Since the idea is insusceptible of verification, it owns an elusive adaptability that lends it a specious air of concreteness. The over-hasty extension of a scientific generalization is more speedily checked because the justification of values has not been staked upon its adequacy. And finally, since one way of finding support for a philosophical standpoint is to show how nicely it dovetails with the history of philosophy and how it strikes a balance between historical issues, the historian of philosophy assumes unconsciously a mediating function: while endeavoring to fit contemporary speculation to history, he is tempted also to fit history to contemporary speculation. So it comes about that the historical movements are given weights commensurate, not with their original importance, but with their connection with a present programme and its supporting tradition.

A glamor of infinite significance is conferred upon history and the history of philosophy when the basis of exegesis is an idea of an *a priori* and transcendental character. Crabbed philosophies become visions, and testy philosophers become seers when a system represents some sort of cosmic essence, or reflects the movement of reality, or forms a necessary stage in the realization of a pre-ordained goal. As the great men of history are sometimes viewed as instruments of the Almighty, so philosophers might be regarded as embodiments of the absolute. This seems to imply that the philosophy of no man can be

hopelessly vain and empty. It must contain its valid elements because it shares in a march which may seem devious but is really unswerving. For the very erroneousness of a philosophical idea is demanded in a necessary movement towards a fixed goal. And since what is evolving is human life, philosophy is an expression of life, perhaps its supreme expression, and it must be relevant to life. It is, indeed, the hidden core of that life. Philosophy in general, and everybody's philosophy in particular, is thus vindicated. Even when the exegetical formula is less poetic and romantic, the simplification of the course of history by means of the one principle provides a satisfaction for the mind that wishes to sum up existence in an epigram. This simplification makes a history that leaps from one matured systematic expression to another, with the confused processes of generation and maturation undisplayed. Historical philosophies are thus still further removed from the common life.

To protest against the assumption of the finality and inclusiveness of one formula of exegesis does not preclude the writing of history. It can be written in terms of less pretentious reductive schemes. What is thereby lost in loftiness of aim and elevation of thought is more than replaced by a useful precision in results. It should be possible to discover schemes of interpretation resting on a more assured basis, more amenable to control and empirical test, and involving a less finely-spun metaphysics. What is needed are ideas which, if unconfirmed by research, will not unhinge all existence and dislocate all values, and endanger misbegotten and high-flown hopes. Where so much is at stake, failure is too depressing to be tolerated. A premium is therefore put upon sleight-of-hand.

The truth of the matter is that histories of philosophy that shall organically relate systems to their generating conditions and connect concepts with the massive and fecund life of groups, have not been written. We do not possess histories that really relate the doctrines of different times to human life and the ideas and purposes then current, in such a manner that appraisal in a concrete setting is facilitated. Those that are launched under the imprimatur of some ultimate principle may purport to set forth the course of philosophy in organic connection with all the ramifications of human experience, but they dissatisfy because their focus of interest is the elucidation and illustration of the principle rather than a search for whatever ideas may be imbedded in the materials. They fluctuate between the interpretation of philosophy in humanistic terms and the interpretation of human events in terms of presuppositions concerning the character of the historical process. Without this double movement of adjustment history may

lose much of its consecutiveness and its esthetic and romantic charm, but it will be better history.

The real problem is often overlooked. The principles of interpretation must be developed from the historical materials, not history from an assumed principle. It is becoming, or has become, old-fashioned to try to sum up history in a phrase, or to know the forces and meanings supposed to be secreted beneath the surface of historical changes. It is proper modesty not to speak with assurance of the implicit aims and ends of history. We look upon history as made but not pre-ordained. Only by a constant play of the imagination over the data can the emergent ideas be apprehended and brought into clarity of statement. And we hesitate before attempting to reduce these ideas to a systematic unity to be hypostatized as the end or goal of history. It may seem paradoxical to insist that the data must generate the guides to interpretation, since, as has been pointed out, the mere assemblage of the data presupposes some degree of interpretation and constructive activity. The paradox exists only when the situation is considered abstractly. What it amounts to is an insistence on a constant give and take, as opposed to a wholesale preliminary taking. And at any rate, the paradox will hold of the verification of all hypotheses.

Here and there are sporadic attempts to accomplish the involution of historical philosophies and the circumstances of civilization and life in which alone they are rightly apprehended. But these efforts have mostly had the character of presenting the philosophical tableaux *against* a background of "social forces:" but just this projecting against a background leaves the actual interweaving and interlocking untouched. Perhaps the nearest approach to this ideal is to be found in the historical writings on general culture. These works, however, are concerned with philosophy proper only in a general sense. Some of them have had an axe to grind, being apologetical in character. And however close may be the community of interest between histories of culture and histories of philosophy, there is a demarcation between them based on a difference in purpose and emphasis.

There is nothing novel, of a surety, in claiming that philosophies germinate and sprout in a social and cultural matrix; that individual philosophies are the products of converging lines of thought and feeling; and finally, that they become the instruments by which the inarticulate and nascent ideas and aspirations are brought to clear consciousness and organized expression. Through the interaction between the products of reflection and the inchoate mass of sentiment and thought, occurring at every stage in the movement,

a more or less satisfying and consistant world-view or "reasoned creed," to borrow a phrase of Merz's, is evoked in the social consciousness. A system of ideas, varying in the degree of fidelity and pertinence to the germinating mass, is precipitated from the turgid inconstant complex in which the traditional, the accepted and unquestioned, and the sacrosanct are ceaselessly warring with the new and problematic elements that surge up because of the stress of circumstances; the new ideas represent the voicing of compelling needs that are all the more insistent because of the manifest infertility of the time-honored in the face of new situations. It must be urged, however, that there is no fixity of temporal sequence in these interactions, nor even a guarantee that the interactions shall occur. A philosophy may be comparatively foreign to the contemporary social environment, having little relevance or significance for it, and largely neglectful of its characteristic demands. The needed synthesis and articulation may come from art, from religion and poetry. Because philosophies are generated in societal life, and frequently afford it a genuine expression, it does not follow that they always do so, or that they always do so in the same degree. Through conservation of past superstitions, through one-sidedness of emphasis, or inaccuracy of diagnosis, and finally through the limitations of individual power and capacity, the response of this or that philosopher may be beside the point. Such philosophies lead nowhere and finally die of inanition. There are blind alleys in history. Again, the philosophical synthesis may be artificial, corresponding neither to contemporary needs nor to past needs: for it may be devoted to carrying out a problem which arose from an inadequate or unilateral comprehension of a bygone problem. There is such a thing as a society outgrowing a problem before philosophy has had time to find its solution. Or, if we must say that the problems do not change, but only the formulations of problems change (which often seems to be a distinction without a great deal of difference), we find the spectacle of society eagerly awaiting new formulations of its problems while philosophical interests are devoted to the older formulation, and philosophy acquires a value primarily antiquarian. To affirm that every philosophy is either essentially germane to its age, or else ahead of it, would be equivalent to ascribing to philosophers a power of efficient divination little short of miraculous. Hegel has something to say to the effect that the owl of Minerva does not take flight until twilight. To which might be added the wish that it could see how to fly in the daylight.

In short, the interaction of the products of speculation and the world of men is subject to manifold circumstances of time and

place: it is always contingent, accentuated by the unexpected novelities that accrue from the sheer unpredictable creativeness of life itself. To these matters our Pneumatologies and Histories of Culture and Histories of Philosophy based more or less consciously on inflexible *a priori* schemes have done scant justice. And there are considerations in extenuation of this neglect other than that involved in the influence of the *a priori* expository principle.

In the first place, the more general and comprehensive the view taken, the less apparent are the discontinuities that are intermingled with the continuities of history. And furthermore, the minute concatenations, as well as the preliminary and anticipatory expressions of new ideas, are buried so deeply in a mass of historical rubbish that human patience can hardly be expected to delve into it. The genealogy of doctrines is more apprehensible than the genesis of ideas. For the genealogy deals with a partly systematized set of ideas; it begins with a product and traces its subsequent history. But the genesis of the fragmentary thoughts whose gradual agglutination represents the starting-point of the first logical development, is obscured and overlooked. And this holds whether the origin of ideas is to be sought in the individual genius or in the common life or in both together. The setting of a doctrine is often recorded more concretely in history's lesser monuments than in its greater, for the greater contain the product in its final stages and not in its earlier moments. This gives to historical philosophies when abstractly expounded a specious clairvoyance, an unreal detachment and independence. Therefore the history of philosophy is likely to present to us a series of results only, or to picture each development of thought only in the later and more conscious stages of its fashioning. These results can be the more readily organized into a continuity because of this simplification through omission, and because they represent the more abstract stages of reflection in which the peculiarities of origin are lost. And it is primarily in these abstract stages that the new idea makes its juncture with the systematic tradition; this contact, when that tradition has prestige and authority, may lead to an adjustment of the new to the old, and not of the old to the new. False perspectives of one sort or another are engendered.

We have noted the fact that not every philosophy can be regarded as vitally related to the totality of cultural needs and problems. The relations it may sustain may be partial, and the philosophy may be astigmatic, and consist of sterile fantasy, in part at least. Or finally, it may be responsive to social pressure only by casting its response into a form congruent with that of the idols of the theater of a superseded time. Besides these dangers, there are

others arising from the attitude of detachment that in its first intention is only provisional. Philosophical thought that tries to furnish a genuine and sympathetically enlightened response to the requirements of one age and that grapples with its dominant problems may be carried by a sort of inertia of its own to a point far removed from the actualities of its source or of its contemporaneous setting. It must abstract from the concrete flux of life; but it is perilous to forget to re-enter it. Its problems are formulated, its methods of procedure devised. But these preparatory measures that involve a temporary and instrumental aloofness may become confirmed as a relatively lasting aloofness. A certain hardening and callousness sets in and its sensitivity to the life that created it is diminished. An independent world of reflection is created, and thought lives and moves in this detached sphere. Philosophy thus is in danger of becoming an exclusive cult. One is reminded of the present virtual detachment of art from the common life as compared, let us say, with its intimate union with that life in Renaissance times. When this exclusiveness and seclusiveness becomes characteristic of philosophy, its successive systems manifest a higher continuity just because their excessive sequestration makes philosophical pursuits so largely a process of dovetailing systems and pushing still further preceding analyses and syntheses. But the world of life and deed has meanwhile forgotten its ancient needs and devices in the face of new difficulties provoked by new combinations of forces not even foreshadowed in that former time. While waiting for the elucidations of philosophers, some compromise has been perforce accepted, and somehow or other the world has in ungainly fashion passed around and beyond the former obstacle and turned its attention to the new, with the philosophers lagging in the rear.

There is accordingly less reason for wonder, when these matters are borne in mind, that philosophy should continually be open to the charge of irrelevance, pedantic ossification, and unserviceability. The world seeks the consolations it desires in other ways, in religion or in art, or more probably falls victim to hare-brained but well-advertised doctrines that are "all the rage." In such a situation the philosopher is puzzled by the world, and the world a great deal more puzzled by the philosopher. The latter can not meet the world and lend it assistance without something of a rupture with the philosophical past.

Our histories of philosophy, however, have been largely responsible for making that rupture with the past so difficult. The obstructions to fruitful philosophical activity, it will be generally admitted, have existed at times, if not always. What is not so generally recognized is the rôle of the histories in perpetuating and con-

firming such obstacles. This is the reason why past modes of writing the history of philosophy should be discarded. The aberrations and irrelevances of philosophical thought, both historical and contemporary, are not recognized because the works do not reveal concretely the history of ideas. Conformity with the portrayed trend of history and astuteness in effecting a skilful junction of one's speculation with that trend, comes to be more of a test of the success of a philosophy than its relevance to the life about it and its fruitfulness in the guidance and enrichment of that life. The histories of philosophy do not adequately reveal how germane ideas may have been to the age in which they flourished, the limitations involved in this quality, nor how speedily they lost that quality after they had become abstracted from their several original settings and confirmed as zealously guarded traditions in a cloistered mental life. We fall into the two-fold error of regarding as sheer abstractions and perversities ideas that were concretely validated and accepted in their times, and, on the other hand, of regarding ideas that had grown to be abstractions—mere side-shows of the intellectual circus—as a preordained movement of thought. The problem concerning the number of angels that could dance on the point of a needle may leave us to day coldly indifferent. It would be well, however, if histories of philosophy were to show how and why the problem was once real and pressing. But not merely that. It would be helpful to learn how the problem ever became a matter of indifference—and then to take the lesson to heart. A history of philosophy that is neither an *a priori* organization of the materials, nor a handbook of facts, and is not, finally, a diffuse literary history of culture, should serve to mitigate these evils. It should help to free philosophical thought from over-respect for the past, to provoke a more forward-looking manner of thinking, and make history an aid and not an obstacle in the pursuit of wisdom.

ALBERT G. A. BALZ.

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

“DUALISM IN ANIMAL PSYCHOLOGY”

IT can not be often that a critic gives so much pleasant stimulation to the “critickee” as Dr. Grace de Laguna has given by her discussion under the above title in the issue of this JOURNAL dated November 7. I am well aware that my views need philosophical overhauling, since the habit of philosophical analysis has too long been laid aside by their author; and I have only gratitude for the philosopher who is kind enough to give them expert attention.